

## Artist Profile: Jimi Ray



**Jimi Ray.** Tweed-clad lothario, red wine drinker, accomplished jazz guitarist and internationally acclaimed human beatbox. A man of many talents and so charming with it.

Following a childhood in the notorious Northam estates of Southampton's decaying docklands, Jimi might have gone into any career: medicine; architecture or geography teaching. It wasn't likely though, and by his teenage years Jimi was well known to both the local law enforcement and professional skating communities. Following a broken ankle Jimi refocused his energies on music performance, bizarrely discovering a latent talent for jazz guitar that led him into session and live work across the country.

His gift though, is for layered beatboxing – building a song live from scratch using only his mouth, some cheap effects and a loop pedal. Although the resulting sound is full of rich electronica textures it also retains an organic warmth and spontaneity that is unique – this isn't a nerdy walk through the patches on a synth but an infectious swagger through a world where Thom Yorke, Grandmaster Flash and Richard D. James met at a Chas 'n' Dave concert.

With a formidable reputation on the live circuit including festival appearances in the UK and invited showcases in France, Belgium and Estonia as well as invited guest spots with Me One and Kench among others, Jimi has as yet been too busy to do an EP for us but after much arm-twisting is expected to complete his debut mid-2008.

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